



image: (cover) melanie jayne taylor, 2013, sea, side (overleaf) karla marchesi, 2013, montag
(inside left top) melanie jayne taylor, 2013, coastal fragments (inside left bottom) melanie jayne taylor, 2013, light lines
(inside right top) clare rae, 2013, untitled (glass slides) (inside right bottom) clare rae, 2013, untitled (decanted rack)

isbn: 978-0-9870529-6-4


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wandering archive

karla marchesi | clare rae | melanie jayne taylor



Wandering Archive

Karla Marchesi | Clare Rae | Melanie Jayne Taylor

Archives help us remember. They give us things we can hold in our hands. As time passes, they tell us what was considered important, what was worth holding onto, and then, in time, we choose what is worth revisiting. Archives tell stories through the process of collecting.

Karla Marchesi's suite of seven paintings, presented here, creates a personal archive, building upon an art practice that has often explored the way in which we imbue the objects around us with significance. The paintings in this series depict the artist's bath towel as it hangs from a hook in her bathroom each day for a week, uniquely interpreting the towel's successive range of textures and folds. Marchesi captures, through layers of paint, the fleeting moments that construct our lives, but which we rarely stop to notice. Here, Marchesi spends more time preserving the moment for her catalogue, than the towel spent hanging in that formation on the rack. But this seems to be the nature of cataloguing and remembering. The layers of paint are applied like a memory that is revisited and remade.

Marchesi titles her works according to the day the scene occurred, creating a systemised order to the chaos of everyday life, and allowing these fleeting moments to be both recorded and compared. Produced in the early months of Marchesi's relocation from Australia to Germany, the works capture both the beauty of the everyday, and the way in which objects take on new significance amongst processes of dislocation. This series of paintings, a makeshift archive of a small detail in a new context, emphasises a single moment's continuity with, and subtle differences from, every other day and every other place.

Clare Rae's latest series of photographs presents a very different view of the archive. Photographed in the National Gallery of Victoria's photographic storeroom, Rae is seen awkwardly negotiating the space. She appears most at ease in the space when she takes an almost animalistic form, crawling through the space, partially obscured behind shelving, hanging from racks. Rae's body appears as an intrusion into the order of the archive.

This is the paradoxical condition of the archive. We have archives in order to view them, to look back and remember them, but each interaction threatens their existence. Rae's photographs capture a moment of a fleeting impromptu gesture, juxtaposed against a context designed to maximise order and consistency. Rae's body is an interruptive presence within a precisely controlled and monitored space that attempts to ensure the images it contains remain fixed, unchanging, and predictable.

The delicate nature of the photographic print is often brought to the fore in Melanie Jayne Taylor's practice; scratches, fading and other artefacts of film are explored rather than hidden. However, the analogue is not fetishized, but is instead brought into dialogue with digital processes of re-organisation and duplication. Taylor's practice is as much concerned with the continued processes of interpreting her personal archive of images, as it is concerned with generating new images. Images are carefully arranged within the gallery, or in the case of *Coastal Fragments*, exhibited here, within the space of a single print. In Taylor's practice, images are never fixed but instead, through a dynamic concept of the archive, become subject to constant reinterpretation and reconfiguration. This process brings to light previously dormant narrative and graphic connections between images and even between exhibitions. Taylor's images are constantly unboxed: this is an archival practice defined by interruption rather than stasis.

The work of each artist included in *Wandering Archive* engages with the concept of the archive in personal, and often playful, ways. Eschewing austerity and authority, these artists have produced idiosyncratic archives, or interactions with institutional archives, that emphasise the archive as a process, defined by transience, malleability and reinterpretation.

Simone Hine and Kyle Weise

